

deficit, we spend more money, and that is in fact what would happen.

Many Members who did not come down to the floor who have been doing their work in the back rooms, they have been anxiously trying to divide up what they were going to spend had we adjusted the CPI. They were not going to do that in front of the television cameras, they are going to do it in the back rooms.

I share some concerns that have been expressed that there has been some smoke and mirrors in the budget; we will see that as it unfolds in this agreement. But many of us believe that this should be a scientific process, not a political process, and it was coming to be a political process of how we could get more dollars away from senior citizens, away from families, away from veterans, so we could spend more for groups that were politically important to some Members or concerns about a TV ad here or a TV ad there. That is not the way we should adjust the CPI.

To summarize, this is a sense of Congress regarding the Consumer Price Index to take politics out of the process. The CPI is intended to provide as accurate as possible measurement of inflation and enables the Government to limit the impact of inflation for those most vulnerable to its bite.

The determination of the CPI also has significant long-term consequences on determining tax liabilities, as we heard from the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] today. Our purpose today is to recognize that because of the tremendous importance of the CPI for average Americans, any modification of the CPI should be made by those most capable of doing so in the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It should not be a political football, it should not be something to try to take from one group to give to another. Its determination should be left in the hands of those most qualified to accurately measure inflation.

Senior citizens and taxpayers across this Nation owe thanks to my distinguished colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. FOX, and his cosponsors, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. ENGLISH, the gentlewoman from New York, Mrs. MALONEY, and the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY. This decision should be based on the best policy, not on politics.

Mr. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution to affirm that any changes made to the Consumer Price Index [CPI] only be made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS]. This is a matter of grave importance to millions of Americans; it is not just a matter of accounting.

Recently, the Boskin Commission Report stated that CPI overstates inflation by as much as 1.1 percent. Since that time, commentators and some Members of Congress have urged that Congress take this recommendation and immediately lower the CPI. Lowering the CPI by 1.1 percent would result in increasingly large annual savings, starting at \$6 billion in fiscal year 1998 and rising to nearly \$70 billion in fiscal year 2002. That is certainly an incentive to lower the CPI.

But these savings would come in large part from reductions in the cost of living increases for Social Security recipients, veterans, and other Federal retirees. This is unfair and unjust. We should not balance the budget on the backs of seniors and others who have spent their lives in the service of their country.

More importantly, making such an arbitrary change would be wrong. The CPI should reflect the rate of inflation, not the need for politicians to balance the budget. I have full confidence in the BLS to make any necessary adjustments in a timely manner to reflect changing conditions in our economy.

I am one of nine cosponsors of this legislation. I have also written, along with several of my colleagues, to the President and Budget Committee Chairman KASICH urging them not to include an automatic CPI adjustment in the budget agreement and calling for separate vote on any adjustment should it be included in the budget resolution.

To a degree those efforts have been successful, as the budget agreement now only assumes a very slight change in the CPI. I oppose even that provision and will work with my colleagues to strike any such language from the budget resolution when it comes to the House floor should that be necessary.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER] that the House suspend the rules and agree to pass the resolution, House Resolution 93.

The question was taken.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 93.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 133 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2) to repeal the United States Housing Act of 1937, deregulate the public hous-

ing program and the program for rental housing assistance for low-income families, and increase community control over such programs, and for other purposes, with Mr. GOODLATTE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Thursday, May 1, 1997, amendment No. 9 offered by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. JACKSON] had been disposed of, and title I was open for amendment at any point.

Are there further amendments to title I?

AMENDMENTS OFFERED BY MR. LAZIO OF NEW YORK

Mr. LAZIO of New York. I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be considered en bloc, Mr. Chairman, and I will read off the following amendments:

Amendment No. 48 offered by the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH]; amendment No. 47 as printed in the RECORD offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KLINK]; amendment No. 1 offered by the gentlewoman from Colorado [Ms. DEGETTE]; amendments Nos. 23 and 24 offered by the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO]; amendment No. 49 offered by the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. TAYLOR]; amendments Nos. 20 and 21 offered by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT]; amendment No. 28 offered by the gentleman from Nevada [Mr. ENSIGN]; and amendment No. 33 offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mrs. JOHNSON].

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendments.

The text of amendment No. 48 is as follows:

Amendment No. 48 offered by Mr. SMITH of Michigan: Page 15, line 21, strike "includes" and insert "may include."

The text of amendment No. 47 is as follows:

Amendment No. 47 offered by Mr. KLINK: Page 69, line 14, after the period insert the following:

The Secretary shall require that each such agreement for local cooperation shall provide that, notwithstanding any order, judgment, or decree of any court (including any settlement order), before making any amounts provided under a grant under this title available for use for the production of any housing or other property not previously used as public housing, the public housing agency shall—

(1) notify the chief executive officer (or other appropriate official) of the unit of general local government in which the public housing for which such amounts are to be so used is located (or to be located) of such use;

(2) pursuant to the request of such unit of general local government, provide such information as may reasonably be requested by such unit of general local government regarding the public housing to be so assisted (except to the extent otherwise prohibited by law) and consult with representatives of such local government regarding the public housing.

The text of amendment No. 1 is as follows: